



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FEBRUARY 15, 2005

CONTACT:

MICHELLE MOWERY JOHNSON

(615) 313-4707 (OFFICE)

(615) 944-4819 (CELL)

DHS WORKS TO EXPAND SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

NOW SIMPLIFIED TO MAXIMIZE PAYMENTS TO LOCAL SPONSORS

NASHVILLE, Tenn.--The Tennessee Department of Human Services is working hard to ensure that more children living in low-income areas receive healthy, nutritious meals during the upcoming summer months. To achieve this goal, DHS is recruiting new sponsors and encouraging returning sponsors to add sites and increase participation in the 2006 Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

Federally funded through the U.S. Department of Agriculture and administered in Tennessee by DHS, the SFSP is designed to serve nutritious meals to low-income children during the summer months when the school lunch and breakfast programs are usually inactive.

Each year DHS contracts with a wide variety of local agencies ("sponsors") which arrange to produce, deliver, serve and account for free meals and snacks to children at one or more eligible locations ("sites") in their area. Last year, 51 sponsors operated 875 sites statewide. More than 1.7 million meals were served, benefiting roughly 27,500 children each day who attended summer programs at recreation centers, parks, schools and churches.

To help attract new and retain existing SFSP sponsors, DHS has contacted more than 1,200 groups and community leaders, including all public school superintendents and food service directors, local Human Resource Agencies (HRA's) and community action agencies and Boys and Girls Clubs. All of these organizations will find that the program has been simplified to reimburse sponsors based on the number of meals served and the documented costs of running the program.

Sponsorship of the program is available to the following organizations: public and private nonprofit school food authorities; state, county or municipal governments; colleges and universities participating in the National Youth Sports Program; residential public or private nonprofit summer camps; and private nonprofit organizations. Sponsors must agree to serve meals to all children in attendance regardless of their race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

For information on sponsoring the SFSP, contact David Farmer or Doug Hutchison, before April 3, 2006, at (615) 313-4749 or via e-mail at david.farmer@state.tn.us or doug.hutchison@state.tn.us. The deadline for agencies to submit sponsor applications is May 5, 2006.

For more information on the Summer Food Service Program visit:

<http://www.state.tn.us/humanserv/childcare.htm#food>

###

CITIZENS PLAZA, 15TH FLOOR
400 DEADERICK STREET
NASHVILLE, TN 37248
615.313.4700